



Planning Department
Community Development Department, Town of Los Gatos
110 E. Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95030

September 14, 2020

**Re: The Rouleau Residence, 17361 E. Vineland Ave
Project Description/ Letter of Justification**

To Whom it May Concern:

On behalf of Aaron and Dana Rouleau and their young family, I am pleased to present this new project to the Town of Los Gatos. The proposed project includes the technical demolition of an existing two story house and the construction of a new two-story home and detached garage. This letter accompanies the submitted building plans and additional exhibits for the above referenced project, and contains descriptions of the property, the neighborhood, and how it complies with the Residential Development Standards.

EXISTING PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The property is located on the north side of E. Vineland Avenue, east of Winchester Blvd. The immediate neighborhood consists of both one and two story single family homes along with an apartment complex at the end of the street. The existing home is a simple Craftsman bungalow constructed circa 1915. The neighbors on the left side are the only one story, while the neighbor to the right has a two story home. The remainder of the homes are a mix of one and two stories and vary in style.

The existing home sits about 20 feet back on the lot. The property has a slight rise from the street to the building pad. A two car detached garage is behind the home, accessed by a driveway that loops around the house. There is one 36" (DBH) Cypress tree on the side property line that is in conflict with the driveway and needs to be removed. No other trees are slated to be removed.

The current two-story home is 1,680 square foot. The original house was constructed circa 1915 (according to the Real Estate listing) and was remodeled extensively sometime in the late 1950's. The front porch was enclosed, the second story was added along with the entire rear portion of the house. All of the windows are cheap aluminum frames. The roof is composition shingles and there is no architectural detailing to speak of.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

The proposal includes partial demolition of the existing residence and the construction of a two story, 3,282 square foot home with an attached covered veranda in the rear. The allowable FAR for this property is .302, which equates to 3,336 SF. The proposed FAR of .297 is the highest in the immediate area but only by a small margin, and the house will not be the largest. By contrast, the adjacent home to the right is 3,122 SF which has a FAR of .282. The homes across the street have lower FAR but are much larger in overall area.

The proposed architecture is done in a modern farmhouse style. The forms and materials are simple yet elegant: painted siding, dark gray painted aluminum clad wood windows, gray standing seam metal roofing on the lower roofs and dark gray comp shingles on the remaining roofs. The siding, columns, corbels and trim will be painted white. (See color boards)

The lower floor of front facade (existing walls) is being returned to more of an original state by reopening the front porch. This 8 foot deep front porch will be supported by large square wood columns and new wide stairs will connect it from the front yard to a new wood/glass entry door and sidelites. The new second floor will be set back and be partially hidden by the front roof. A pair of gables brings symmetry and balance to the overall facade.

The kitchen and living areas are focused to the rear yard and transition to the exterior via a covered veranda. The second story massing has been balanced to the center of the property. The master bedroom suite plus three bedrooms and bathrooms are located upstairs. With the exception of one bedroom and some small windows for light and cross ventilation, all of the windows are oriented to the front and rear yards to respect the privacy of the adjacent neighbors.

LANDSCAPING

A preliminary landscape plan is included with the application. The plan shows the one 36" Cypress to be removed and two (2) replacement trees as mitigation. Drought resistant plantings are proposed. Please refer to the plan for more information.

COMPLIANCE WITH RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The proposed home specifically addresses the Residential Design Guidelines as follows:

SITE/ PLANNING:

- Utilizing the existing home walls and footings, the new additions have been placed primarily to the rear, with the second floor set back from the first floor walls.
- Utilizing a two-story design approach helps reduce the impact on the site in terms of impervious area and general disturbance to the surrounding area.
- Grading has been kept to the minimum required for proper site drainage.

HARMONY/COMPATIBILITY:

- The neighborhood character is somewhat eclectic, so a farmhouse style is natural fit
- Per 2.3.6, the two story portion is situated on the right side, adjacent to the neighboring two story home, and the one to two story transition happens on the left side, adjacent to the one story neighbor.

SCALE AND MASS:

- The proposed second story is set back from the first floor, and is partially hidden by the lower roof. This greatly reduces the appearance of mass and scale to the passerby (Per 2.3.1)
- The second floor is set back from the lower walls except on the right side. Additionally, eaves have been continued on all sides to reduce two story wall planes.
- The house has been carefully articulated with roof elevation lines and walls pushed in and out that break up each elevation.

EXTERIOR MATERIALS:

- High quality materials adorn this traditionally styled home, including painted wood siding, clad wooden windows, gray metal roofing, and shaped wood corbels.

- Square wood columns support all of the many porches, and simple shaped mouldings trim out the windows and doors.

ENERGY CONSERVATION:

- The house will employ high quality dual glazed, low E wood windows, ultra-high performance insulation packages and high efficiency mechanical systems for heating, cooling and domestic hot water.
- Cross ventilation is provided to allow natural cooling.

PRIVACY:

- The entire orientation of the home is primarily to the front and rear. The side windows on the second floor, with one exception, are minor and are there to not only help dress up a blank wall but to provide extra light and cross ventilation.
- The perimeter of the property is/will be lined with many trees and hedges that screen the house and exterior entertainment areas, providing privacy for all.

LANDSCAPING:

- All proposed landscaping shall comply with the Town's Landscaping Policies
- Proposed drought tolerant plants and landscape materials have been chosen to enhance both the architecture and the natural setting of the lot.

GEOLOGICAL:

- There are no significant geological hazards that exist to prevent a safe and secure structure to be constructed on this site.

CONCLUSION

This house will be compatible with both the neighborhood and the site. The size, mass, color and exterior style are in keeping with the surrounding properties and enhance neighborhood.

Sincerely,



Gary Kohlsaat
Architect C19245